

# Porthcawl POST

Porthcawl Comprehensive School Newsletter | Cylchlythyr Ysgol Gyfun Porthcawl



## Pupils shine on stage in **Jekyll & Hyde**



For full story and more memories of this great show please turn the page >>>





#### Performing Arts Students

“This year we were able to help so much with the development of the choreography and movement sequences, it was so much fun to be able to be more involved during our Performing Arts lessons”

Ella Verderame, Ruby Richards, Amba Thomas

**T**his year as a Performing Arts Department we had the privilege of being able to perform in Frank Wildhorn's 'Jekyll and Hyde the Musical'. A gothic musical which focuses on a Victorian scientist's descent into madness as he separates himself into two, his regular self Dr Jekyll and his evil alter ego Mr Hyde.

From the very first auditions, through every rehearsal, the teachers provided an environment which allowed us as a cast to fully express ourselves while also challenging and expanding our performance skills. Regarded as one of the best productions ever staged by the school, 'Jekyll and Hyde' was loved by audiences and received many rave reviews from the local community.

The whole cast excelled at every moment in the show and became incredibly tight knit both on and off stage. The cast wishes to thank the Performing Arts teachers for their complete commitment to us and also their consistent support and belief in our ability, we are all so grateful.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the crew, Pavilion staff, Tech team and also the community in and outside of school who have supported the shows over the last few years. It was an emotional farewell to the Pavilion, as 'Jekyll' will mark the last show for our school until the renovations are complete in a few years' time.

This truly was the moment! We would also like to thank Dan Minto for taking all these amazing photographs of the show and for sharing them so kindly with the school. We are so lucky to have these wonderful memories preserved forever! Thank you!







Performing Arts Student

“This year I had the honour of being able to play both Jekyll and Hyde. I feel so completely privileged to have been able to have had this opportunity. It was truly a monster of a role, but I had the best time performing such a challenging part, especially in the final school production before the closure of the Pavilion. Thank you so much to the Performing Arts teachers, I can’t thank you enough”

Wil Morgans





# Introduction

As we are now well into the Spring term, I would like to thank everyone across the PCS community for their continued support. Pupils in Year 11 and Year 13 are busy preparing for their Summer GCSE, AS and A Level examinations and by the time this edition of the Porthcawl Post is published the 'exam count down' will be counted in weeks and days. To all pupils in Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5, I wish you all the very best for the Summer 2024 examination series – your achievements have been excellent to date, keep up the hard work and effort!

As mentioned in a letter I sent to parents in January, last November, Year 11 sat their Mathematics GCSE. I am delighted to inform you that pupils performed very well with over three quarters of the year group securing a grade at A\*- C and over a third of the year group achieving an A\*- A grade. Our 'Numeracy Points Score' for the cohort was very good and achievement across the whole year group was positive – an outstanding achievement! This year group, like so many has experienced significant disruption during the start of their secondary school education and these achievements are testament to their hard work and effort. Well done to Year 11 and of course, the Mathematics Faculty! Year 11 have performed very well in their previous GCSE English Literature and Science examinations, and their achievements provide for a strong foundation for the future. I would like to personally congratulate all our pupils on their outstanding achievements – I am looking forward to the Summer successes!

This term we have held our annual school show at the Grand Pavilion as we staged 'Jekyll & Hyde the Musical' for our 45th production in our school history. Our annual school show allows us to showcase our school in the local community. It is true community event, and it was lovely to see so many of you there. So, where do I start? How do I summarise? I am sure you all agree when I say this – it was quite simply outstanding! I am in complete awe of the talent and commitment demonstrated by the students at our school. Tradition, talent, and the associated standards of excellence; there is no better feeling! There have been performances for our own pupils, three evening performances and a final matinée performance. To the cast, crew, all staff, and parents involved, your work ethic, talent and commitment is something to behold – thank you for everything that you do! I speak on behalf of our whole school community when I say this – Thank You! I am certainly looking forward to our 46th school production in

2025. Due to the scheduled refurbishment of the Grand Pavilion, it is very likely that we will require a different venue for our school production in 2025. When we know more, we will let you know.

Currently we are preparing for two very important school events, the Eisteddfod, and our Presentation Awards Evening. Both events bring our community together and share talent, success, and achievement – I look forward to both. We have experienced recent rugby success. At the end of the Autumn term, our Year 10 rugby team remained undefeated as they retained the Ospreys Cup for the third year in succession. This team are the reigning Welsh Champions and as I write they are preparing to defend this title. Our Year 8 rugby team reached the Ospreys Plate Final, again, another excellent achievement. To all pupils representing our school in all sports and activities, I thank you and I wish you the very best in future competitions.

This term, Year 11 have been working through their A Level options choices and it is pleasing to learn that we are expecting over 160 pupils to join Year 12 in September 2024 – excellent news! Therefore, it is likely that our Sixth Form will be approximately 250-300 pupils in September 2024. Choosing subjects and progression routes is such an important time in school and I have thoroughly enjoyed speaking to many pupils about their plans and intended next steps. Year 9 have also completed their options choices as they plan for the start of their GCSEs.

To end, in the Autumn term I had the opportunity to speak to parents and pupils at our Year 6 Open Evening and it was lovely to see so many families in attendance. I have enjoyed speaking with Year 6 during their recent transition visits and I look forward to meeting more pupils during the future transition events planned. We welcome pupils from our four main feeder primary schools of Newton, Nottage, Porthcawl and West Park and from several different primary schools across Bridgend.

I wish you all the very best and I look forward to sharing more success through 2024.

Kind regards,  
M Stephens  
Headteacher



## Christmas Foodbank Appeal

We were delighted to organise a second Christmas Foodbank appeal this year involving all year groups working together.

Donations of non-perishable food items and other essentials were collected in school, and organised by the students, before being taken to our local distribution centre.

Between December and February last year, Foodbanks supported more than 220,000 children with emergency food, and 225,000 people who needed to use a foodbank for the first time. However, it is anticipated these numbers will be even higher this year. The Trussell Trust predicts that more than 600,000 people in the Winter months will need support and that they will provide more than one million emergency food parcels.

With Foodbanks calling on people in their local communities to donate, we were proud of how much we were able to donate to our local branch. The generosity was greatly appreciated, and Alfie Law (Year 13) and Kayleigh Pugh (Year 8) were wonderful ambassadors on the day.

Support continued with Mr Short organising a staff donation to this worthwhile cause.

***"We're extremely pleased with the response that our school has made for such a good cause. We are always keen to contribute to the community and try to get students involved in initiatives that make a positive difference to others. We would like to thank everyone who made a contribution."***

Mrs Bennion & Mr Stratford

***"I had a lot of fun learning about how the Foodbank works and understanding more about how much we need to help our community when we can. I was proud that I was able to help and was chosen to be an ambassador"***

Kayleigh Pugh Year 8

For further information  
about Foodbanks please visit:  
[www.trusselltrust.org](http://www.trusselltrust.org)



# 6th Form Interact Group

## Christmas Tree Festival – 6th Form Tree

Interact is the school's fundraising group, dedicated to raising money for different charities both in the UK and beyond. Interact is also part of the Youth section of the Rotary Club in Porthcawl, and we are proud to work in partnership with them.

It is currently made up of 6th Form pupils, although the group are hoping to expand it by inviting all year groups. The team is made up entirely of pupils, who run all the meetings and organise all the activities. The purpose of the group is to develop leadership, communication and team working skills while discovering the power of SERVICE ABOVE SELF.

Each year Interact pick one or more charities to support, and then raise money for them through a range of activities and events. For example, cake sales, hamper raffles, Christmas Candy Cane Secret Messages, etc. Such activities allow for anyone in the school to take part in and support the cause.

Mr Pucella (ICT Dept.) supports the Interact team and oversees the fundraising activities the pupils run.

At Christmas time, the team have entered the Christmas Tree Festival competition at All Saints Church. The idea of the tree was to showcase all the charities the group have supported since 2018.

The team looked back to all the charities supported since 2018 and have dedicated this Christmas tree to showcase all the charities supported.

1. Porthcawl RNLI – Saving lives at Sea.  
<https://www.porthcawl-lifeboat.co.uk/>
2. Porthcawl Food Pantry - Supporting residents who may be struggling to get weekly groceries.
3. ROHHAD Association - ROHHAD Syndrome is a cruel, complex disease that severely impacts quality of life. An extremely rare orphan disease affecting approximately 1 in 73 million people worldwide. The children diagnosed with ROHHAD face a daily fight for survival and are unlikely to reach adulthood.  
[www.rohhadassociation.com](http://www.rohhadassociation.com)
4. Young Minds - Providing young people with tools to look after their mental health.  
<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/>
5. Mind - A mental health charity. Here to make sure no one has to face a mental health problem alone. <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
6. BAVO – Bridgend Association of Voluntary Organisations - provide FREE support and assistance to all member community and voluntary groups, not-for-profits and social enterprises in our area. <https://www.bavo.org.uk/>
7. Bridgend Carers Centre - Bridgend Carers Centre support people caring for family members, partners, friends or neighbours.  
<http://www.bridgendcarers.co.uk/>
8. Lads & Dads - A men's mental wellbeing and support group operating out of Bridgend in South Wales. <https://www.ladsanddads.org/>

9. Breast Cancer Now - Breast Cancer Now is a UK charity providing world-class research and life-changing care for people affected by breast cancer.

<https://breastcancernow.org/>

10. Tenovus Cancer Care - Tenovus Cancer Care is a Wales-based charity giving help, hope, and a voice to everyone affected by cancer. <https://www.tenovuscancercare.org.uk/>

11. Alzheimer's Society - are here for everyone living with dementia and their loved ones – wherever they are, whatever they're going through.  
<https://www.alzheimers.org.uk/>



## MULLER DELIGHTS

No, we are not talking about a new yoghurt coming on the market. In fact, we are talking about the DELIGHTFUL MAX MULLER from 8JW. Congratulations to Max for winning the Halloween Hamper Raffle. The Sixth Form Interact group sold tickets for 50p each and Max was fortunate enough to win the prize. £50 was raised and proceeds are being donated to Breast Cancer Now. Breast Cancer Now operates across the whole of the UK with a local branch in Cardiff. Well done to the Sixth Form Interact team.

Find out more: Website: <https://breastcancernow.org/if-Direct>  
Line: 02079603587

If secondary breast cancer affects you or the ones you love, research carried out by 'Breast Cancer Now' could help buy more time. Find out about their research at [breastcancernow.org/if](https://breastcancernow.org/if)

If anyone from any year group would be interested in working with the Interact team to raise funds for charities of your choice, please come along to their meetings which are held Monday lunchtimes in A5. Thanks.





# Charities' Week



This year's Charities Week was such a huge success - throughout the course of the week we managed to raise a whopping £2038.22! As a team we decided to split the donations up, donating £100 to four local charities in the Bridgend area and then the remaining money was sent directly to Children in Need - where our school was named on live television for raising one of the largest sums of money out of all the schools in the UK!

Throughout the week the Head Team ran a range of events, from leg waxing to sponge the teacher. We also held donut sales multiple times during the week which raised over £150 alone! Every year the Head Team groups together to wear a group fancy dress costume at the end of the week. We spent a long time trying to decide on what to wear but we finally decided upon a very relevant and popular theme - Barbie! All the girls chose a different Barbie to wear, whilst the boys only had one character to choose from - Ken. The costumes were incredible, and the pupils and staff alike made a tremendous effort as well. Fitting in with the Barbie theme, one of our team members Finty Kehoe, with the help of her dad, built a life-size Barbie doll box where on the Friday, pupils could make a donation to have their photo taken in the box - which went down a treat!







Charities' Week is such a fantastic time of year at Porthcawl Comprehensive School, seeing all the staff and pupils come together for such an incredible cause year upon year to raise over £2000! Thank you to every person who took part in the activities, all the staff who bravely volunteered and everyone who made a donation, contributing to a record-breaking donation to Children in Need!

Amelie Symmons ~ Student Leader





# PCS Hosts its very first CPRathon Challenge



On 9th November 2023, the Head Team helped organise a CPR marathon to enable us to get a defibrillator at school and to raise awareness of the importance of learning how to perform CPR. Our challenge was to do CPR continuously and effectively for 12 hours. We were fortunate enough to have the Welsh Ambulance Service and First Responders helping us all the way through to complete our task. We began at 9am and then finished 12 hours later at 9pm. Throughout the day, each year group came in groups to perform CPR for three minutes. Everyone received training and they were aided and encouraged by staff, the WAS and the Head Team. Lots of pupils and staff made generous donations throughout the day which contributed to our collection. Once school had finished, we then welcomed members of the local

community into the Jubilee Theatre where they joined in. They also had the opportunity to learn more about CPR and its importance through demonstrations and information leaflets. We welcomed a range of sporting and local groups and also pupils from the school who came to support the cause for a second time - the entire community stepped up for such an important cause and it was a huge success! Thank you so much to the Welsh Ambulance Service and volunteers, to everyone who took part and everyone who made a donation.





Clare Crook, Head of Porthcawl Comprehensive School's Sixth Form, said:

"We were excited to host this event, as by educating our students on what to do when an emergency presents itself will help build a resilient community. With the help of the Welsh Ambulance's volunteers, we were able to teach over 1,000 students CPR in preparation for the event and were delighted to be joined by members of public and other organisations, including the local Brownies and Cubs, Town Council and Bridgend Council, the local Rugby Club and Choir, along with Police, Fire and Lifeguard service. During the day every student from Year 7-13 participated in three minutes of CPR at the same time, which was a huge undertaking, but it was a great opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of early CPR and defibrillation."

Well done everyone! A fantastic achievement.





# First Give Final Update

From September 2023 the whole of Year 9 undertook the First Give Project which aims to raise awareness of social justice. The project was mainly delivered by the Year 9 form teachers with support from the First Give team.

The project was launched by the First Give team in September who delivered an assembly outlining the exciting project. It was followed by a week of assemblies in which Year 9 received a range of talks from several local charities to expand their knowledge of the charity sector and some of the challenges faced.

After researching, each form class had to select a local charity with the primary aim of learning about the charity and raising awareness. In Health and Wellbeing lessons, pupils worked collaboratively to raise awareness of their chosen charity and plan their social action. A range of charities were chosen such as Mental Health, The Wallich and The Turner Syndrome Support Society and pupils used a wide range of ideas to promote their chosen charity such as Year 9 charity football match, cake sales and wearing coloured socks.

Each form class had to select one group that would represent the form class in the final.

Prior to the final, the winning group from each form class participated in a workshop to help with their presentation and delivery skills.

The final took place on Wednesday 13th December in the Jubilee Theatre and the judging panel consisted of Mr Stevens (Head Teacher), Mrs Liz Wren Owens (School Governor) and Cllr. Jonathan Pratt.

The winning charity was The Turner Syndrome Support Society who received £1000 from First Give. A big thank you to all of the Year 9 form teachers and Mrs Thelwell-Davies, the Head of Year 9 for your fantastic support and enthusiasm throughout the project. Also, to Year 9, First Give were really impressed with the quality of the presentations produced.

Mrs Poole





# Future Chef Competition Bridgend Heat

Future Chef is a national competition that is looking for the next young people who are interested in cooking and could be the next generation of chefs.

Dylan Morgan-Rowe and I were selected to cook in the local heats at Bridgend College. The challenge was to create a dish for two people costing under £5.

Dylan made a Teriyaki beef with pickles carrot and noodles.

I made a chicken and mushroom pie, served with broccoli.

When I walked into the kitchen, I felt nervous as I have never participated in a competition like this before. There were 6 competitors from across South Wales, we had 90 minutes to cook! When I started cooking there was a lot of pressure, at one point I thought that I

may not have fully cooked my food - but it was ok! The judges said that there was only 2 minutes left, so I had to work quickly to get it on the plate! As I brought my plate into the dining area, all the pressure disappeared.

The judging took about 15 minutes and they finally came out and gave everyone a certificate and announced who would go through to the regional finals. Sadly neither Dylan nor I were selected. We all had a try of everyone's dishes and in my opinion the lasagne was my favourite. It was great to see what everyone else had made and it gave me lots of ideas for next year.

Being part of the Future Chef competition was a brilliant experience as I learnt a lot throughout the competition and through the hours of perfecting my dish.

Rhys Atyeo ~ Year 9



## Wreath Making in Tŷ Enfys



27 pupils gathered in Tŷ Enfys for 3 lessons to each create a Christmas wreath. Lots of fun and laughter filled the room and all were very proud of their individual creations.

This is the second year of carrying out this activity and it is a definite hit with staff and pupils.



## Carers' Week

In celebration of Carers' Week, on the 20th of November, Bridgend Young Carers came in to deliver assembly to Year 7 pupils, informing them of the fantastic work they have been undertaking to support Young Carers across Bridgend county. A cake sale took place during break and lunchtime arranged by the school's Young Carers Champion, raising a total of £100. A big thank you to staff at PCS for baking the cakes and the pupils for their support.



## Year 12 Biology

Year 12 Biology students dissected the heads of various fish species to closely inspect the gills, helping the pupils to gain a better understanding of how bony fish carry out gas exchange in an aquatic environment. Thank you again to the Fishmonger's Cat (John Street) and fishmonger Max Hall (Year 12), for kindly donating and delivering these specimens.

Mr Hutchison



## Year 12 – DofE

Pupils involved have signed up to an array of activities for their Skills, Volunteering and Physical sections. These include learning an instrument, driving, karate, joining a running club, cookery and many more.

Pupils have also been attending training sessions to prepare them for the expedition section and have been looking at map work, route planning, hazards, Countryside Code etc and have just started their First Aid Training with St Johns.



## Visit to St Briavels

During mid-November, the English Lit/Lang Department organised a trip to St Briavels Castle, situated near the Forest of Dean, providing us with a unique opportunity to blend our creativity and history skills. Departing on the Friday morning, we made a pit stop at beautiful Tintern Abbey to complete a writing task while looking around the historical ruins.

Upon reaching St Briavels Castle, our accommodation for the weekend, we learned about its supposed haunting. Guided by Ms Raine, we explored creative writing techniques, using the castle's ambiance as inspiration. In the morning we were given a hearty breakfast before our journey to the Forest of Dean. The autumnal landscape offered a picturesque setting for some creative writing.

We then stopped by a nearby cafe for a warming lunch before we began to head back home on the bus.

As a group we thoroughly enjoyed the experience. It was a refreshing break from routine, offering a fun blend of historical exploration and creative inspiration that enriched our school experience.

Ellen Hughes  
Year 13



## READING REWARD

Year 7 and 8 pupils who took part in the English Faculty's Summer Reading Challenge were delighted to have the chance to win an Echo Dot - courtesy of Amazon. Pupils gained points by the number of books they read and the reading challenges they completed. Those that reached the highest level of points - Platinum - were entered into a prize draw.

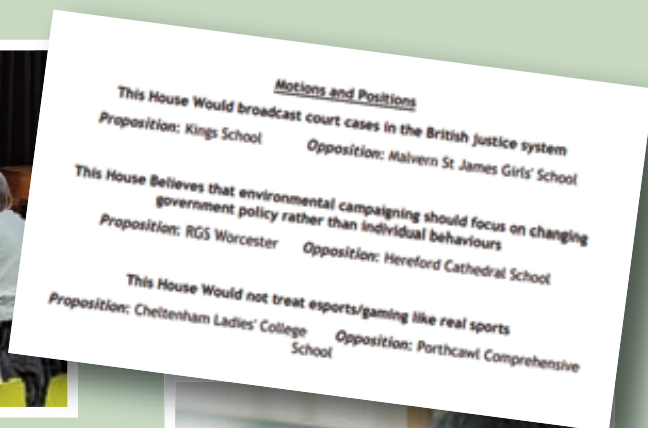
"We are delighted that Amazon has kindly donated prizes to help us promote reading," said Mrs Kembery from the English Faculty. "Studies show that children who read do better in school, in their careers, have better health and even live longer. We hope parents will continue to support us in encouraging reading at home as well as in school. The message is clear: if you want to succeed, read!"

Year 8 pupil Katelyn Bebb looks delighted to win an Echo Dot in a prize draw of pupils who achieved the highest level in the Summer Reading Challenge - Platinum.





KS5 Debate team off to the Regional Final in Hereford in March.



# Porthcawl Blazers on Fire Again!



Debate Workshop with the ESU



Tammy is off to Cambridge with Dewi for the semifinal in March

Building on the success of last year, where we achieved national success in the MACE KS4 Public Speaking competition and attended Cambridge to compete in 'Finals Day,' our debate club has a new name and a new energy. 'The Porthcawl Blazers' have been meeting every Tuesday and Thursday and have achieved even more success this year!

This year we entered our first KS5 debate, following the MACE format. Round One took place in November with the following pupils in role:

Opposer One: **Isobel Comley**  
 Opposer Two: **Tom Backwell**  
 Summary Speaker: **Tammy Igbenehi**

This is a really formal debate and a totally new experience for the pupils. In order to prepare them they experienced a workshop from a representative from the ESU. The first round of the competition was horrendous, with the National favourites 'Cheltenham Ladies' College' as the school to beat! Yet, our pupils showed incredible resilience and a strong belief in their ability to stand up to the most powerful of opponents. They were determined to show them what Porthcawl Students could do! Unbelievably, they beat Cheltenham Ladies' College with the judge declaring our team are 'a force to be reckoned with who beat a formidable opponent!' In January, the second round of this debate took place in Aberdare Community School. This time their opponents were Cardiff Sixth Form College. It was a close competition, but Tammy, Tom and Issie won the second round of Mace KS5 and now proceed to the Regional Final in Hereford; only one debate away from the National Final in London! Well done to them all and thank you for the positive feedback and support from parents.

*"Thank you for giving my daughter Issie the opportunity to take part in the MACE debate. It's been a great experience for her. Good luck to everyone with the next round of the debates!"* Kate Comley

*"Well done to you all. I'm so proud of the team. This is an experience for a lifetime!"* Karen Igbenehi

*"This is wonderful news, please pass on my congratulations to all pupils. To be in the National Final for the second year in a row is an incredible achievement!"* Mr Stephens

However, the success doesn't end there, on the 26th January, four students attended the KS5 Cambridge School Debating competition. This competition was using the British Parliamentary Style of debating. It was a full day of debating but eventually the top four teams were placed against each other. Two groups from this final were declared winners and Porthcawl Comprehensive's Team B was one of these teams! As a result, The Porthcawl Blazers are off to Cambridge, once again, for the National Final of the Cambridge School debate!

Team A was: **Noah Williams**  
**Finey Mantegna**

Team B was: **Dewi Powys**  
**Tammy Igbenehi**



KS4 Debate team enjoying a pre-debate Dominoes

This is a particularly impressive achievement as Dewi is still only in KS4. To say I am bursting with pride for the way these students represented our school, would be an understatement. Stepping into an unknown situation, against schools who have been debating for many years, takes huge amounts of courage. All the students within our debate club really do deserve their success. Keep it up Porthcawl Blazers!



Year 9 Seren Debate Team

We also have a Year 9 Debate team who are just starting to learn their craft but have entered two local competitions this year. They are:

**Herbie Morrison**      **Elijah Cressey**  
**Jamie Roberts**      **Avik Patel**  
**Aleena O'Keefe**

Excellent debating skills shown so far! Well done Year 9!

**Mrs Mahoney**  
 Head of English & Media Studies





# Media Studies Year 12 Horror Posters

Are you scared? You should be!  
40% of the Media Studies AS Level is creating a production of 4 Posters as part of a marketing campaign for a Horror Movie. Once again, our students' talent in Year 12 has been impressive. The students must take all the photos themselves and use a range of apps to edit and layer the photos. Well done Year 12.







# Media Studies Year 13 Magazines



40% of the Media Studies A Level is creating a production of a front page, contents page, double page spread and audio-visual advert as part of a marketing campaign for a magazine. Our Year 13 pupils have excelled all expectations in creating outstanding productions. The students must take all the photos themselves and use a range of apps to edit the photos as well as writing a 750 word article. Well done Year 13.





# Bedknobs & Broomsticks

In December, Year 7 Drama Club staged a production of 'Bedknobs and Broomsticks the Musical'. The production was a complete success running over the course of two shows; both loved by audiences. The cast did an excellent job working with such hard material, the show utilised puppetry, live music performances from Sixth Form student Poppy Shingler and a visually stunning set design that was created in collaboration with the A Level technical Drama students. The production was directed by Wil Morgans, Ella Verderame and Ruby Richards with assistance backstage from Amba Thomas, all Drama A Level students. The cast astonished on stage and all had an amazing time during both shows and in rehearsals.

*"The show was so fun to perform and really helped me develop my stagecraft and confidence, as this was my first ever musical"*

Eira Kehoe

*"The show was such a challenge for me, and I loved every second. I'm so grateful I was able to perform as Ms Price, one of the leading characters. It was so amazing!"*

Grace Peacock

*"The Drama Club helped me so much to develop friends and be embraced so openly in such a welcoming community"*

Suki Francombe



## Year 9 Production of **The Addams Family**

The Directors of the show were Romy Francombe, Finty Kehoe (Dance Choreographer) and Enzo Lipley who was our Sound and Light Director.

We performed the show twice to the public and parents and carers on 5th and 7th December 2024.

Messages from the cast-

*"We are really grateful for being able to perform in a production just for our year group, as it prepares us and grows our confidence to learn new skills and be a part of the school show in Year 10."*

*"It was my first lead role, so it was great as it has started to prepare me for future shows and it helped me get out of my comfort zone, it was a great show"*

A message from Romy Francombe (Director)-

*"It was an amazing opportunity to be able to direct such a talented group of people! Every member of the cast worked incredibly hard to create a piece to be proud of."*





# National Theatre Update

After the visit to the National Theatre, the newly developed NT Connections project is going extremely well. Recently the cast banded together in the Piccolo Bar Café arranging a concert performance to fundraise for the performances, raising over £1000 for the project. The cast are eagerly awaiting the first two performances in school on March 21st and 23rd as well as our performances in the Sherman Theatre Cardiff on April 3rd and 4th. Rehearsals are well underway, and the cast can't wait to get back to it now that the curtain has closed on this year's school show 'Jekyll and Hyde'. Exciting times ahead!



December last year we went to Lille in the North of France. I went with my friends and we watched some movies. We had a long bus ride there and Mr Holt, Mr Stratford and Mr Pucella played 80's music on the bus. When we arrived at the hostel we unpacked, showered and played some pool (Mr Holt won). Then we went to sleep.

The next day, we woke up early, had breakfast with some French food and got ready for the day. First we headed to Laser Tag where we all had a bunch of fun. In the end, Mr Stratford and his team

won but it was very close! After an hour of laser tag, we walked to the beautiful Christmas market, there were lots of entrancing lights and a giant Ferris wheel that we ended up going more than once! We all went to the shops in town first: Sephora, Starbucks and MacDonalds then headed back to the market. We ate some sugar-coated churros which tasted incredible. Many of us bought gifts for siblings and friends.



We met up at dinner time under the giant Christmas tree and took a bunch of photos before going to the bowling alley. We had lots of fun there, we laughed a lot. By now we were all very hungry. I had a burger and chips but couldn't finish it as it was very filling! We then had dessert (ice cream or crêpe!) and headed back to the hostel for a late night of playing pool and music.

In the morning it was calmer and we got on the bus to go home. On the way, we stopped in Auchan, a big supermarket to fill up on French food and more presents for the family. Overall, it was one of the best holidays I've been on. My friends made it so much better and it gave us some unforgettable memories.

Olivia Grimstead Year 9.





# Christmas Carol Service 2023



We were delighted once again to hold our annual Christmas Carol Service in the beautiful setting of All Saints Church on Wednesday 20th December. It was lovely to see the church packed full of audience members and the high number of pupils taking part in this prestigious event.

The performances were of a very high standard yet again this year. The variety of items showcased biblical and modern readings, storytelling and movement through drama, as well as a range of both modern and more traditional Christmas music for the audience to enjoy. The entire evening displayed the versatility of pupils here at PCS, and we are so proud of each and every one of them that participated.

Pupils performed the Carol Service for a second time on Thursday 21st December for Years 7-9. Again, it was so lovely to be able to provide all pupils with the opportunity to experience a Christmas Carol Service held in the traditional setting of a church right on our doorstep. The service was wonderfully received by pupils and staff, and the quality of each performance was highly appreciated.

Thanks go to the English, Drama, Music, RE, Technology and Welsh Departments once again for all their contributions that made the Carol Service such a triumph! I must extend this thanks to Miss Owens, and also to our valued team of instrumental peripatetic teaching staff for their dedication to extra-curricular ensembles and producing high quality teaching for our pupils. This was the first carol service for our new Upper Strings teacher, Ms Pritchard and we thank her for plunging straight in with String Group!

It is with great pride that we say a huge 'thank you' to all the pupils for their dedication and commitment to the wider life of the school through their participation within extra-curricular opportunities. Congratulations to all the readers, performers, instrumentalists, and vocalists for their confident and engaging performances, and to the Performing Arts stagehands and Head Team - the evening ran so smoothly due to your hard work and dedication! You are all a credit to the school.

Be sure not to miss the Carol Service in December 2024!

Mrs Giles







Be sure not to miss the **Carol Service** in December 2024!





# Bake Off

Bake Off November 2023. Beautiful and scrumptious French madeleines.

**1st place: Mathilda Bugler 7LM**

**2nd place: Elsie John 7JC**

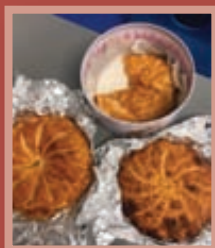
**3rd place: Alanna O'Keefe 9HR**

Bake Off December 2023. **Winner: Jessica Brown.**  
Very tasty German Lebkuchen.

Bake Off January 2024. The very tasty marzipan King's cake "La galette des rois".

**Joint 1st place: Ellis Leonard-Davies 7RM  
and Elsa Palmer-King 7OM**

**2nd place: Jessica Brown 7OP**



## Seren Language Workshop - Year 9



Porthcawl Comprehensive held a Seren Language Workshop on 7th December, hosting guest speakers from Cardiff University and Halsbury Travel company to talk to Year 9 about the importance of learning languages and the potential for great jobs and careers with languages. Pupils and teachers from Brynteg Comprehensive and Pencoed College were also among us to immerse themselves into languages and have lots of fun on the day, going from Employability sessions to Japanese sessions, not to forgetting to mention the pain au chocolat for break!

Madame Morgan et Madame Bishop





# Porthcawl Remembers

In November, our school embarked on a touching Remembrance Day project, where our dedicated staff shared poignant family stories from the First and Second World Wars. Each narrative added a personal touch to historical events, creating a profound connection among us.

Throughout the month, staff members delved into family archives, unearthing photographs and mementos. These stories, ranging from front-line service

to contributions on the home front, showcased the resilience and sacrifices of past generations.

I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to all staff members who participated, as your willingness to share these personal stories with pupils has deepened our appreciation for those who shaped our world.

**Mr Short**  
History Department



Students in the ELSA and Wellbeing groups in Tŷ Enfys created over a few sessions the Remembrance Display board. They used red, purple, white and black poppies to remember people and animals lost in conflict.

## Year 9 Visit Porthcawl War Memorial



In a meaningful educational initiative, our Year 9 pupils have visited the Porthcawl War Memorial as part of their studies on the First World War. The purpose of the visit was to delve into the lives of local soldiers whose names are etched on the memorial, commemorating their sacrifices during this pivotal period in history.

The pupils began their exploration by researching the names inscribed on the memorial, where they sought to uncover the stories of local heroes who had made the ultimate sacrifice. Armed with primary and secondary sources, Year 9 later compiled a research project. This investigation aimed to illuminate the lives of the soldiers, detailing where they served, the challenges they faced on the frontlines, and ultimately, how they lost their lives.

The Porthcawl War Memorial served as a powerful backdrop for our pupils to connect with the past, becoming a tangible link to the historical events they had studied. Most importantly, the visit transformed abstract historical facts into a real, emotional connection with the sacrifices made by our local heroes.

Overall, the visit to the Porthcawl War Memorial was a powerful and enriching experience, bringing history to life in a way that transcends the confines of the classroom. Through their meticulous research and heartfelt reflections, our pupils have not only honoured the memory of local soldiers but have also gained a deeper understanding of the profound impact of war on individuals and communities.

Mr Short History Department



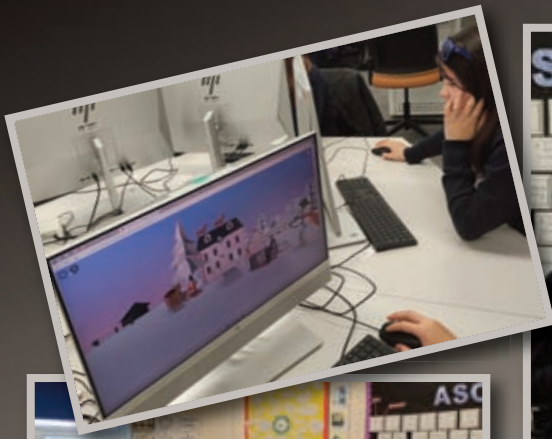
## Last Post

Each year, we are so fortunate to have talented pupils to play the Last Post, a traditional bugle call that is played on Remembrance Day within a moment of reflection where we remember those who have fallen. Although the Last Post is now associated with remembrance, the musical call was originally a signal sounding that the final sentry post had been inspected in a military camp inspection, and the area was secure for the night.

Elliott Leach (Year 13) and Rhys Stacey (Year 9) gave a stunning rendition of the Last Post which was followed by a minute's silence across the school. Thank you to both pupils for marking this very important moment, and enabling the entire school to witness the playing of the Last Post. Da iawn!







# Porthcawl 2 Triumph at CyberFirst!

In November Year 8 girls were chosen to visit Cardiff University and were introduced to the importance of technology in today's society by completing the CyberFirst Adventurers course. They were chosen based on their excellent work and effort during the Escape Room work in Computing lessons. They showed a natural aptitude for problem solving and logical thinking.

At Cardiff University they took part in a number of problem solving and data analysis tasks. The first challenge of the day was looking at how different sports are increasing their use of data eg analysing athletes' performance, touchline technology, working out photo finishes etc. They were then given a large data set and had to analyse athlete's scores to select the best possible team. The second challenge involved

teamwork to solve a range of problem-solving activities. They showed great resilience and won the challenge. They were given a set of 'cool shades' as a prize.

This CyberFirst Adventurers event was to highlight the varied roles and jobs that both exist and involve Technology in the workplace. The aim was to excite and enthuse students with an interest in Technology, both in what we use now and in the future. The event was also designed to counter the stereotype that Computer Science is a subject that only leads to jobs in programming and coding.

On returning to school, girls were split into teams to take part in a national competition run by the NCSC, (National Cyber Security Centre). This is their flagship cyber security contest for schools, which opens annually to girls in Year 8

in England and Wales, S2 in Scotland, and Year 9 in Northern Ireland. Since it launched in 2017, around 70,000 girls have taken part.

That day the competition went live, and the girls had to solve as many 'Cyber Security' puzzles as they could during the week. Every lunchtime and breaktime for a week the girls worked in school as well as outside in order to gain as many points as possible. More than 12,500 girls from across the UK took part with 3608 teams from 750 schools.

All the teams worked well, showing dedication, commitment and teamwork. Congratulations to all 5 teams who took part from Porthcawl Comprehensive School!

But one team showed they were prepared to go the extra mile showing that perseverance certainly does create success. They showed their competitive nature and were determined to strive for first place.

Huge congratulations to the team of Porthcawl 2 who gained over 3000 points and solved over half of the challenges. A special mention must go to:-

- Imogen Brown
- Leah Williams
- Isabela Norman
- Eloise Wyatt

They came 9th in Wales!!!

To congratulate them on being one of the top 10 performing teams from the CyberFirst Girls' Competition in Wales, they are invited to Newport International Centre for a conference and a live "Capture The Flag Competition", along with a (non-alcoholic!) drinks reception, topped off by a 3-course Awards Dinner!

An amazing achievement which shows that with effort and commitment, what can be achieved.





# Cyber Security Computer Science Trip – Year 11-13



In November a number of pupils visited the Spark building at Cardiff University for a Cyber Security Careers Awareness Day. There were a range of presentations and talks from current students and lecturers and a wealth of information on future courses, apprenticeships and other routes into this field.

The Spark building is a relatively new building and it is truly unique. It is a brand new Social Science Research Park – alongside a hub for innovation, start-ups and spinouts. It goes across four floors, is equipped with lettable office space, with hot-desking and co-working areas, high-end conference facilities and joint exhibition/presentation areas, including conference space for up to 200 people.

It supports Social Science research with the integration of a RemakerSpace, a Behavioural Lab, a Fabrication Lab, a Visualisation Lab and a TV Studio. The ReMakerSpace enables organisations to fully exploit technologies such as additive manufacturing (3D Printing) and innovative solutions for repair, remanufacturing and re-use.

Pupils had a tour of the area and looked at 3D Printing machines that ranged from £3000, £30,000 up to £75,000 each. One of the machines was used in the printing of the frames for the masks used by NHS staff during the Covid19 pandemic.

The building is unique due to its OCULUS SCULPTURAL STAIRCASE. It starts on the ground floor as a social stair and there are break-out rooms at each level that are curated differently and they become destinations to different floors.

The day certainly sparked pupils' interest and gave them an insight into what a course at University may look like in the future.



## Winter Wonderland Cardiff



A group of 47 pupils enjoyed a festive evening away at Cardiff Winter Wonderland in the build up to Christmas. It has become tradition, originally started by the now-retired Mrs Davies. The trip is always well-received and this one proved the same. A full coach descended on the capital to take in the festivities, including some time at the fayre, Christmas market stalls and everyone's favourite, the ice skating. It is fair to say we had a mixture of superb ice skaters, namely Finley Williams, and some not so experts. But it all added to the fun.

Pupils enjoyed around 4 hours in Cardiff and every pupil was a pleasure to take away. What better way to start the festive season than an evening in Cardiff with your friend?

Thanks to all staff members who accompanied the pupils.

Mr Stratford







# Year 6 Open Evening 2023



Porthcawl Comprehensive opened its doors to Year 6 pupils and their parents/carers on November 8th, 2023. It is always an excellent evening and we always look forward to meeting Year 6 from our four main feeder primaries of Nottage, Newton, Porthcawl and West Park. We were also delighted to welcome many from the wider community including Trelales, Mynydd Cynffig, Coed Hirwaun and Cefn Cribwr primary schools. Headteacher, Mr Stephens alongside members of the Senior Leadership Team gave a 'Welcome to Porthcawl Comprehensive School' introductory talk and this was followed by groups of pupils and parents/carers being escorted around the school site by members of our Sixth Form, visiting as many departments as possible. Teaching staff showcased the best of what Porthcawl Comprehensive has to offer and a big thank you goes out to all the staff and pupils who helped make the evening such a wonderful success. We are already looking forward to the other Transition Events that will run over the next few weeks which build up to our main Transition Day on Monday June 24th.



If you would like more information on the Transition Programme or are considering applying for admission into Porthcawl Comprehensive from outside the catchment area, please email: [info@porthcawlschool](mailto:info@porthcawlschool), F.A.O. Miss Painter, Deputy Headteacher.





## Les Misérables rehearsals for Open Evening

During November, a group of KS3 and KS4 pupils worked on rehearsing a Les Misérables medley to be performed at the Year 6 Open Evening. The medley included some of the musical's iconic songs like 'At the end of day' as we saw Year 9 students become the urchins of the streets of Paris, as well as 'Castle on a cloud', 'On my own' and 'Do you hear the people sing', performed as a collective group at the end of the performance. The Drama Studio was transformed into the iconic barricade scene and featured an advanced lighting design which helped to elevate the performances. Overall, the night and medley were a complete success, loved by Year 6 audiences.







# Community Christmas Celebration

At the end of last term Porthcawl Comprehensive School welcomed elderly members of the community to spend an afternoon with us to celebrate Christmas. Throughout the visit they got to enjoy spectacular performances from our choir, were able to participate in a raffle and had the opportunity to drink tea and eat mince pies.

We welcomed several different care homes including Albert Edward Prince of Wales and Picton Court. We also welcomed members of the Gilgal Chapel. It was a pleasure to be able to host this event for many members of our

community and bring them all together.

We collected donations from the local community for our raffle prizes as well as a range of confectionary items which we served. We would like to thank Boots, Spar, Aldi, Co-op, Guttridges and B&M for their contributions to our event.

In order for this event to succeed it took a lot of preparation and planning. Firstly, we had to write letters to the local shops in the community to ask for their support and their contribution to our event. Then with the help of Mrs Morgan,

Mr Croucher and other members of staff we were able to successfully run this event.

Overall, we thoroughly enjoyed this opportunity to welcome the elderly members of our community into our school and hope to have this opportunity again in the near future. It was an unforgettable afternoon and our visitors thoroughly enjoyed their trip, getting the opportunity to relax and talk to a range of people.

Sioned Owen & Jess Jones  
Year 11 Wellbeing Ambassadors.









# School Council Visit the Senedd



On Thursday the 30th of November, the School Council had the privilege of attending a guided tour of the Senedd in Cardiff Bay, the home of the Welsh Government where crucial decisions are made. The objective of the visit was to gain insight into the process of decision-making within the country. However, the tour was somewhat derailed from the outset by the presence of the TARDIS and Daleks, which had been moved from the nearby Doctor Who studios in honour of their 60th anniversary. Despite this, our tour guide eventually introduced us to a representative of Friends of the Earth which was initially founded in Porthcawl 40 years ago.

Following this, we were introduced to two members of the Senedd, Tom Giffard and Sarah Murphy. Mr Giffard is a Conservative MS for South Wales West, with an office on Lias Road, while Ms Murphy is the Labour MS for Bridgend and Porthcawl. After meeting these distinguished guests, we proceeded to the observation gallery for the plenary area, where Members of the Senedd convene every Tuesday and Wednesday to debate and ask questions. During this session, we had the opportunity to ask Mr Giffard and Ms Murphy questions about Porthcawl's inclusion in the South Wales Metro, the Porthcawl Regeneration Plan, and other matters of interest.

Our tour of the Senedd concluded in one of the Committee Rooms, where we witnessed a lively discussion about the public funding of research and development within Welsh businesses. Overall, it was an enriching and rewarding experience to engage with our local MSs and gain insight into the workings of the Welsh Government.

Noah Williams – Year 11



## Encon Site Visit

STEM Cymru together with Encon Construction invited a group of Year 9 girls to a 'Girls into STEM' visit to the Metrolink construction site in Porthcawl. The girls had an introduction to the company and careers in engineering and construction, followed by a tour of the site, kitted up in full protective equipment. They found the visit informative and showed great engagement and interest, asking excellent questions about the company and the development, especially sustainability features such as the green roof. They also learned a great deal about career opportunities in the construction industry and different routes into STEM careers. The girls said that the visit made them feel more involved with developments in Porthcawl as well as opening their eyes to the variety of jobs available. The visit came at the right time as Year 9 were just considering their GCSE choices, and it was encouraging to hear the enthusiasm these girls had for STEM subjects and careers. Thank you to Encon and STEM Cymru for the opportunity!





# News from the **Primaries**



## West Park Primary School

We welcomed everyone to Spring Term, including our brand-new Nursery Sunbeams, with Hook Days to introduce our new topics for Spring! FARMYARD BARNYARD, WEATHER DETECTIVES AND EXTREME EARTH! Early Years pupils have already taken a trip to Cefn Mably to kick start their topic! What a wonderful way to spark curiosity and engage thinking. We have spent the first weeks of term engaging with all our families and staff have worked hard presenting Open Afternoons and Workshops in order to showcase our inspiring learning environment, learning powers and rich curriculum. We have celebrated lots of sporting success already this year with pupils demonstrating commitment to various clubs including district rugby, netball and Bridgend cross country. As we write, we are looking forward to entering our first Welsh gymnastics competition. This term we are also launching our new improved Sustainable Wardrobe to encourage reusing good quality uniform and beginning to work in our Community allotment alongside our friends and neighbours. Our Platinum Flag renewal will be an opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to global learning and the ways that West Park pupils care for our planet. Look out for the Green Eco flags flying if you are passing WPP!



## Porthcawl Primary School

At Porthcawl Primary School we ended 2023 with a bang! Our younger pupils not only performed their Christmas production but they wrote it too! It was an incredible show with lots of links to Porthcawl and Wales.

Our older pupils also had lots of opportunities to perform. Our amazing school choir performed at Hope Chapel and the Porthcawl Medical Centre and we had a carol concert at Gilgal Church. All the pupils did PPS proud!

Our Year 6 pupils also took part in their annual 'Great Porthcawl Bake off'. This year all the teams baked their own brownies with a variety of ingredients and toppings. We have a number of talented chefs and we really enjoyed showing off our talents at the recent DT Transition at PCS!

We are also gearing up for our next performance. We have been lucky to have the Porthcawl Male Voice Choir perform at our school many times over the last few years. This year we are taking things a step further and performing alongside them in a St David's Day celebration at All Saint's Church. We have been practicing for the last few weeks and we are ready to make the most of this exciting opportunity!

## Nottage Primary School



Our Christmas shows are over, we hope you had a ball! Here at Nottage Primary School, we've battled the elements and faced the storm that temporarily closed our hall. Thankfully, Trinity Church came to the rescue for our performances and we'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone for making it happen. Explorers performed 'A Bundle of Joy', Experimenters performed 'Hosanna Rock' and Entrepreneurs performed their very own version of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.

2024 is set to be a promising year as we have all signed up to become 'Time Hunters' as part of our new whole-school topic. Nottage Explorers have travelled all the way back to the 'Ice Age' and have been learning about freezing and melting. Olaf the snowman had melted but they didn't know why. Our Experimenters arrived at 'The Stone Age' where they have all been on a fantastic trip to St Fagans. Entrepreneurs got scattered all around different time periods. Year 4 have been greeted by the 'Tudors & Stuarts' where they recently enjoyed a seventeenth century experience at Llancaiach Fawr Manor and made plague bags and learnt that ladies in the seventeenth century used wet nappies for face masks! Year 5 have become Pharaohs; they travelled to 'Ancient Egypt' and have put themselves in the shoes of 'Howard Carter' and wrote a diary entry about discovering Tutankhamun's treasures. Year 6 have encountered 'Battles of Britain' arriving at WW2; they conducted candid interviews with residents from the Albert Edward Prince of Wales Court residential home. However, they will all get reunited each week for a variety of Enrichment activities taught by our very own subject specialists.

We recently celebrated National Storytelling Week. Mrs Thomas and Mr Owen even came into our classes to read aloud their favourite childhood story and pupils can now read their favourite stories to Teddi the dog, specially trained for listening.



# Winter Sports

1ST	POWYS
2ND	MORGANNWG
3RD	GWYNEDD
4TH	DYFED

Once again, the support from students for their respective houses was robust and dedicated, demonstrating excellent backing for the house system. As seen in previous years, the age-old saying 'You have to be in it to win it' proved true, with the houses boasting stronger representation generally emerging victorious. However, all participants should take pride in their efforts, as the absence of a dominant house led to fiercely competitive games across the board.

Every pupil who participated deserves commendation for their organization and commitment to both their house and their teammates. Furthermore, it's worth noting the results of the various competitions: the House of Powys clinched the football title, Gwynedd and Dyfed shared the Netball victory, Morgannwg triumphed in the Benchball tournament, and Powys comfortably secured the Basketball championship.

In the overall standings, Dyfed secured fourth place with 43 points, Gwynedd took third with 44 points, Morgannwg claimed second with 51 points, and Powys also garnered 51 points. However, Powys clinched the house cup for Winter Sports 2023 due to their superior overall wins.

WINTER SPORTS RESULTS 2023					
House	Basketball	Football	Netball	Bench ball	TOTAL
DYFED	9	11	11	12	43
GWYNEDD	14	10	12	8	44
MORGANNWG	13	14	9	15	51
POWYS	15	15	12	9	51





# Dewar Shield Champions

In a historic victory, five students from Years 10 and 11 made a significant contribution as Bridgend Schools District clinched the esteemed Dewar Shield Trophy in December. The 120-year-old trophy, recently refurbished on 'The Repair Shop' TV show, now stands proudly at Bridgend RFC. This marks the first season under the revamped U16 category by the WRU, with Bridgend emerging as champions for the first time in 33 years.

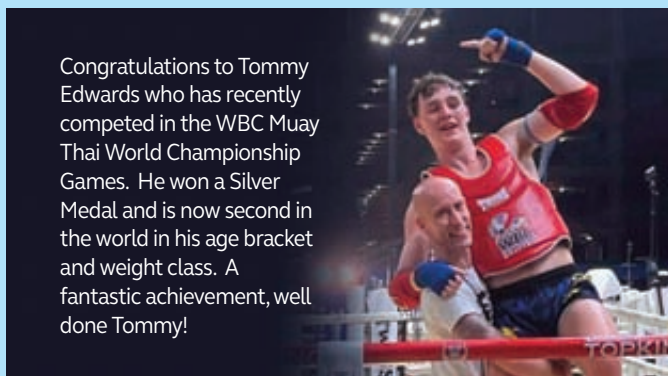
The triumph by the 'Class of 2023' adds to Bridgend's previous victories in 1990, 1984, 1982, 1979, 1977, 1973, 1971, 1970, 1966, and 1934. Ben Harvey, Xavier Thomas, Harrison Burke, Alex Evans and Matthew Clatworthy, the key players in this success, are now actively engaged in the Ospreys Regional Age Grade U16 squad until April. Notably, Alex and Matthew will continue their association with the Bridgend district in the upcoming season, aiming to defend the coveted trophy. This achievement is a testament to their dedication and skill, bringing glory to the school and community.





# Silver Medal for Tommy

Congratulations to Tommy Edwards who has recently competed in the WBC Muay Thai World Championship Games. He won a Silver Medal and is now second in the world in his age bracket and weight class. A fantastic achievement, well done Tommy!



## Pupil Achievements

### Spring 2024

*Many congratulations go to the following:-*

#### Tristyn James Year 13

Represented Wales at Swimming Gala in Geneva

#### Wil Tweedy Year 7

Selected for the South Wales Football Squad

#### Sian Adams Year 8

Qualified to swim at the Welsh National Winter Swim Gala in December. Selected by the City of Cardiff as part of their team to swim at a Gala in Stuttgart in June

#### Isabella Daly Year 8

Qualified for the Welsh Winter Swimming Meeting

#### Cara Wheatley Year 13

Hockey Wales Young Ambassadors Programme - Gold

#### Evie Lipley & Daisy Barnfield Year 10

#### Annie Rees & Esther Morris Year 8

Hockey Wales Young Ambassadors Programme - Bronze

### Instrument Exams

Congratulations to all musicians that have sat grade exams over the past term! Well done for showing excellent dedication to practising and preparing for these examinations on top of your normal lessons.

Please can ALL pupils that have sat any external music or musical theatre exams, please bring in your certificates to reception to be scanned. They will be kept on as a school record and count towards future UCAS points.

Remember to update your music teacher on any success that you achieve or see Mrs. Giles so that she can update her records and publish your achievement in the next Porthcawl Post!

Diolch, Mrs. Giles

Name	Year	Instrument	Grade
Caitlin Jenkins	Year 8	Clarinet	Grade 2 MERIT
Samuel Cubbage	Year 9	Bassoon	Grade 2 MERIT
Florence Cronje	Year 9	Oboe	Grade 3 PASS
Alice Norton	Year 9	Flute	Grade 2 MERIT
Megan Tinning	Year 12	Clarinet	Grade 4 PASS
Jayden Griffiths	Year 9	Electric Guitar	Grade 2 DISTINCTION
Tamsin Jenkins	Year 10	Saxophone	Grade 4 DISTINCTION

### PARENTS/CARERS

We rely on you for our information!  
Has your child achieved success or recognition relating to an extra-curricular activity? If so, please email

[pressbox@porthcawlschool.co.uk](mailto:pressbox@porthcawlschool.co.uk)